

Around the Block

A Block House Municipal Utility District Publication

SEPTEMBER 2021
VOLUME 30
NO. 2



Amenities & Events

WALKER HOUSE HOURS

Tuesdays & Thursdays

10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Wednesdays (Appt. Only)

AMENITIES

Walker House

(Tumlinson Park & Pool)

2600 S. Block House Drive

P: (512) 259-0959

Apache Park & Pool

3100 Block House Drive

P: (512) 260-2699

Tonkawa Park

301 Susan Lane

Bike Trail

2601 S. Block House Drive

Jumano Park & Community Center

1301 Black Kettle Dr.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Sept. 08** | MUD Special Board Meeting
- Sept. 22** | MUD Board Meeting
- Oct. 09** | Community-wide garage sale
- Oct. 16** | Large item drop-off at Jumano Park
- TBD** | Disc golf opening

COMMUNICATIONS TOOL UPDATES

Website and Newsletter

The Block House Municipal Utility District's (MUD) staff has been busy implementing changes to the logo/branding and updating the MUD's website – a refreshed look, new navigation and a new URL (Uniform Resource Locator), blockhousemudtx.gov reflect these work efforts to date.

The improved website provides its users an opportunity to look up information by function and categories. The "I Want To..." function in the main navigation directs users to specific pages where information is located so you don't have to navigate through layers of information to find what you need. Other new website features in addition to the improved navigation includes: frequently asked questions, emergency notifications, eNotifications, increased search capabilities and enhanced use of social media.

What is an eNotification system?

An eNotification system allows you to customize what information you would like to be sent via email when information on the website changes – categories include News, Events and Request for Proposals (RFPs). It's an easy way to get only the information that you would like to see – so sign up! You can add or update e-notifications at any time by choosing "Change eNotification Preferences" at the bottom of the emails.

Need help?

Email info@blockhousemudtx.gov

How to Stay Connected

To stay up-to-date on information from the MUD, sign up for the MUD newsletter, Around the Block, which this name was submitted by resident Dr. Keith Yerkes, or follow Block House MUD on Facebook or Twitter. See the many ways to connect with the MUD at www.blockhousemudtx.gov/connect.

September 8 Public Hearing Set for 2021/2022 Tax Rate

One of the most important duties of the Block House Municipal Utility District board of directors is to levy the tax rate for the MUD and approve an annual budget.

Every year at this time, the MUD Board works to finalize a budget for the next fiscal year. In conjunction with adopting a budget, a tax rate must be established to provide adequate funding to pay the district's annual debt service and maintenance and operations. The 2020/2021 tax rate was \$.76 per \$100 valuation.

A public hearing will be held prior to the tax rate being set on September 8 at 6 PM at the Walker House.

This fiduciary responsibility is taken seriously as the MUD provides essential services such as water and wastewater services; fire protection; and, solid waste disposal services. The MUD owns and maintains all parkland and its amenities, so it is very important to budget maintenance and operations to properly operate these amenities.

Community Large Item Drop Off at Jumano Park

October 16

Back by popular demand and open to **BHC residents only**—the MUD will be holding its semi-annual large item drop off day at Jumano Park (3101 Black Kettle Dr.). The date is set for October 16 from 9 AM – 2 PM (or until the dumpsters are full). On the day of the event, Williamson County Deputies will be verifying resident IDs and water bills, so load it up and bring it on over to Jumano Park. This event does not include hazardous waste so please [read more online](#) about what is and is not accepted.



What's a Stormwater System Anyway?

Submitted by Director Steve Bennett



Along Block House Creek streets you've no doubt seen those long, open, "slots" between the curb and road. You know—the place where your favorite football disappears, and the stray cat runs into. Those are inlets to the stormwater system. They connect via piping underground and eventually end up in the creek—Block House Creek. The system safely conveys the water away from homes to avoid flooding, ponding, breeding insects and other related issues. The system does NOT handle sanitary sewerage, which is an entirely different system. The stormwater system delivers rainwater, unfortunately, it also transports leaves and grass clippings blown into the street, trash, paint, antifreeze and assorted other pollutants that are carelessly dumped. Keep in mind that all piping in this system drains to Block House Creek.

Residents CAN and SHOULD do better at preventing anything but rainwater from entering the system. Why do better or why should we care? Because no one, whether human or wildlife, likes to stop and gaze into the creek and see waves of trash, plastic bottles or old toys. The additional grasses and leaves we allow in could clog the inlets and can potentially cause our cul-de-sacs to flood. The MUD, in turn, must hire people to clean the storm drains out and spend tax dollars on something which could be prevented. When the additional grasses and leaves make it to the creek and deposit there, it reduces the creek's capacity—that too can possibly cause flooding or ponding.

What can you do to help? You can make a difference by keeping picking up loose trash, collecting leaves and grass clippings and disposing of them properly, and taking hazardous pollutants to certified deposit

locations, so the creek doesn't contain anything that doesn't belong there.

The MUD is mandated by the State of Texas to monitor, report, clean and clear these waterways. The MUD has been involved behind the scenes for several years clearing waterways for flood control, removing trash, monitoring the waterways and filing reports to satisfy our responsibilities to the state. It requires considerable effort to comply and all actions can make it either harder or easier—**Block House Stormwater Management Program**. Did you know when the original developer was planning Block House, a study was performed by an archaeologist and it was determined people have been living along Block House Creek for the last 12,000 years. Residents are fortunate to live in a neighborhood steeped in such amazing history. I don't know about you, but I don't want to be the generation that stops the tradition from being available to the next generation. It's up to us to make a difference. Please, let's each do our part to protect our namesake—Block House Creek.

Call Boxes at Apache and Tumlinson Pools



Have You Noticed the Newly Installed Call Boxes Outside the Pools?



Call boxes were installed at both the Apache and Tumlinson Pools as part of the Williamson County pool permitting process. These call boxes connect directly to a 9-1-1 operator when activated and allows for quicker response to emergencies at the pool. If you witness an emergency at the pool, please press the button on the call box and tell the 9-1-1 operator the facility address located on the sign at the call box.



Outdoor Grilling Safety

It's that time of year when cooking outside and having barbecues in the back yard are a weekly occurrence. To keep you safe when you're grilling, the Cedar Park Fire Department as uncontrolled sparks can cause fires.

Safety tips for grilling include:

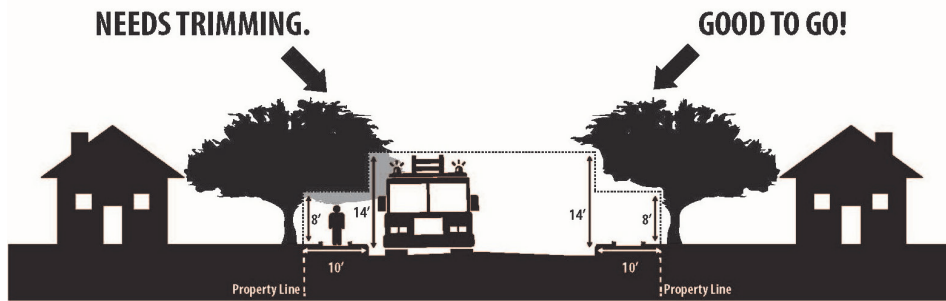
- Place grill away from flammable materials
- Have a water source or extinguisher nearby when grilling
- Watch for flying embers especially when first lighting a fire
- Never leave a fire unattended
- Make sure your coals are completely out after you are done cooking

Remember, fire safety is everyone's responsibility!

Trim Your Trees for Public Safety

Block House MUD contracts with a certified arborist to trim trees, bushes, and other vegetation in the parks, but streets and sidewalks are maintained by individual residents and/or Williamson County. Tree trimming helps ensure the safety of our neighbors, utility workers, EMS, Fire Department, school buses, etc. Foliage around water meters must also be groomed so the meter may easily be manually read, if necessary. In order to accommodate fire trucks and other emergency vehicles, tree branches should be trimmed a minimum of eight feet above the sidewalk and 14 feet over the street (see picture below).

Tree Trimming



Trees that encroach upon these heights in the right-of-way may need to be trimmed in order to prevent vehicle obstruction or damage. Residents are encouraged to arrange for their own tree trimming, either doing it personally or by engaging a certified arborist, so that trees appear even and meet owners' aesthetic standards. If Williamson County or Cedar Park crews trim trees and foliage out of public right-of-ways, please be aware that they do not do any aesthetic trimming; it is for safety purposes only and may not meet your standards for how you would like your trees and foliage to look.

The hot summer through cold winter months are the best times to trim trees. This is because the beetles that help propagate oak wilt, the most destructive disease affecting live oaks and red oaks in Central Texas, slow their activity between July and January. Oak wilt is caused by the fungus *Ceratycystitis fagacearum*, which is easily spread when beetles carrying the fungal spores from infected red oaks to fresh, open wounds on healthy oaks.

Fresh tree wounds should be sealed with a tree wound dressing or latex paint, and tree pruning tools should be cleaned with a 10 percent bleach solution or Lysol at all times of the year. The MUD Board recommends contacting a certified arborist to trim your trees.

Visit www.texasoakwilt.org for additional resources.

Thanks to the City of Cedar Park for providing this information and graphic.

Pick Up Your Yard Sale Signs

Block House Creek residents are allowed to hold yard sales whenever they wish, and not just during the twice-a-year community yard sale days, but it is important to remember to please be courteous of your neighbors and pick up all signs after the sale is over.

Leftover signs are confusing, unsightly and often turn into litter. Sticky tape also damages sign posts. Please do not ever place signs on Stop or other traffic signs. Signage along the right-of-way is subject to being picked up by Block House MUD. Please see park rules regarding ROW signs. Signs can be placed on Fridays and must be picked up immediately following the event.

School is Back
in Session



A new school year began August 12th, please be mindful of children walking and riding bicycles to and from school and bus stops throughout the neighborhood.



Leander High School Swim Meet Schedule

The Leander HS Swim Team has an annual agreement with the MUD to use the Apache Pool. The agreement includes their regular morning practices and swim meets. This year's swim meet schedule includes the following dates:

- Friday, September 10th
(7 AM–1 PM)
- Saturday, September 18th
(7 AM–1 PM)*
- Wednesday, September 22nd
(2 PM – 5 PM)
- Friday, October 8th
(7 AM–1 PM)
- Saturday, October 16th
(7 AM–1 PM)*
- Friday, November 5th
(7 AM–1 PM)
- Friday, November 12th
(7 AM–1 PM)*

**Tentative Meet Dates*

**Good Luck to the LHS
Swim Team this year!**



PEC Begins Installing New Electric Meters in Block House

Pedernales Electric (PEC) notified customers recently about an upgrade project to change existing meters to an Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system. Residents should have received a letter or phone call from PEC explaining this upgrade and that there may be a 5 to 10 minute outage at each residence as the meter is changed out.

Please contact PEC at 888-554-4732 if you have questions or find more news and information on PEC's website at <https://www.pec.coop/news/2021/ami/>

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Cecilia Roberts		President
Steve Bennett		Vice President
Ursula Logan		Treasurer
Byron Koenig		Secretary
Stuart McMullen		Asst. Secretary

CONTACT THE BOARD

Block House MUD

Jacquelyn Smith (General Manager)

P: (512) 259-0959

E: gm@blockhousemudtx.gov

BlockHouseMUDTX.gov

WATER UTILITY OPERATOR & BILLING

Crossroads Utility Services

Lisa Torres (Customer Service)

P: (512) 246-1400

E: CustomerService@CrossroadsUS.com

CrossroadsUS.com



Twice-a-Week Outdoor Watering Schedule Still in Effect

Based on City of Cedar Park Guidelines

Block House Municipal Utility District is a wholesale customer of the City of Cedar Park ("City"). Under the provisions of its water supply contract with the City, the District is required, at a minimum, to establish for its residents any voluntary or mandatory restrictions for its customers.

Restrictions include:

- Watering twice per week
- Outdoor watering must be completed before 10 AM and after 7 PM, on your designated watering day
- Residential homes with **even** number addresses water on: **Thursdays and Sundays**
- Residential homes with **odd** number addresses water on: **Wednesdays and Saturdays**
- No watering on Mondays
- All water customers are required to comply with the water conservation schedule as watering conducted outside of these times could result in a fine assessed to your utility bill
- Washing cars at home is allowed at any time, any day, as long as your hose is equipped with a positive pistol grip nozzle so that water is not allowed to flow freely if the hose is put down. Automatic car washes are preferred because of the potential runoff into our creek
- Variances for watering-in new landscaping are available. Visit blockhousemudtx.gov for information to request a variance
- Report water restriction violations to the Block House MUD office by email at info@blockhousemudtx.gov or by phone at 512-259-0959.



Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event

September 25



Waste Management hosts a twice-a-year Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day for residents of Williamson County. The next event is scheduled for Saturday, September 25, 10 AM to 2 PM, at Hutto Football Stadium Parking Lot.

This is not just for hazardous waste! Other items accepted include gently used donations for Goodwill, aluminum and other metals, auto tires, brush, and electronics. Visit the Williamson County HHW website for guidelines and details.

Use this QR code to visit the Block House MUD website!



blockhousemudtx.gov

(512) 259-0959

info@blockhousemudtx.gov